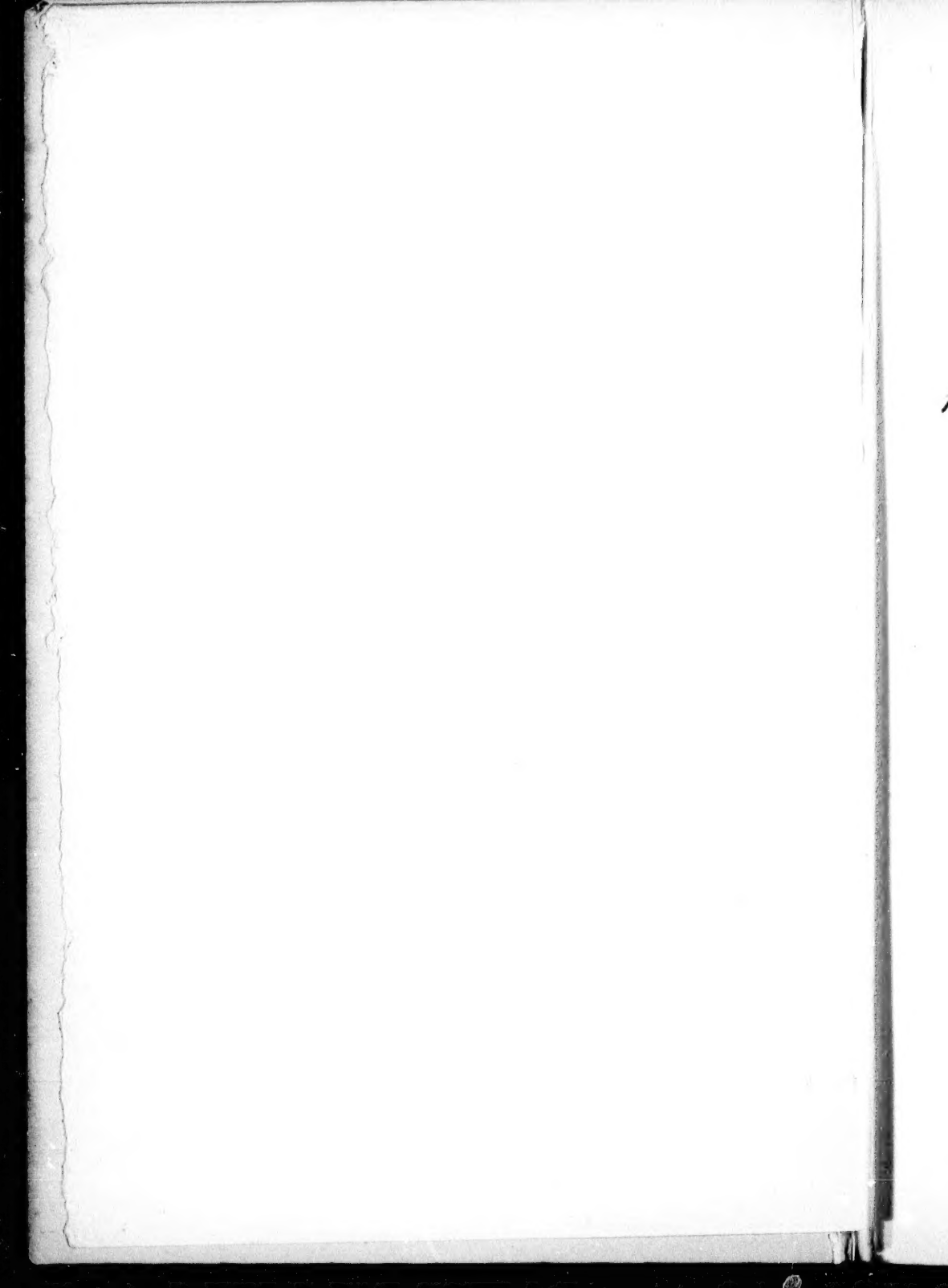


MILESTONES



7

M I L E S T O N E S

A Collection of Verses

BY

Mrs. FRANCES BANNERMAN

LONDON

GRANT RICHARDS

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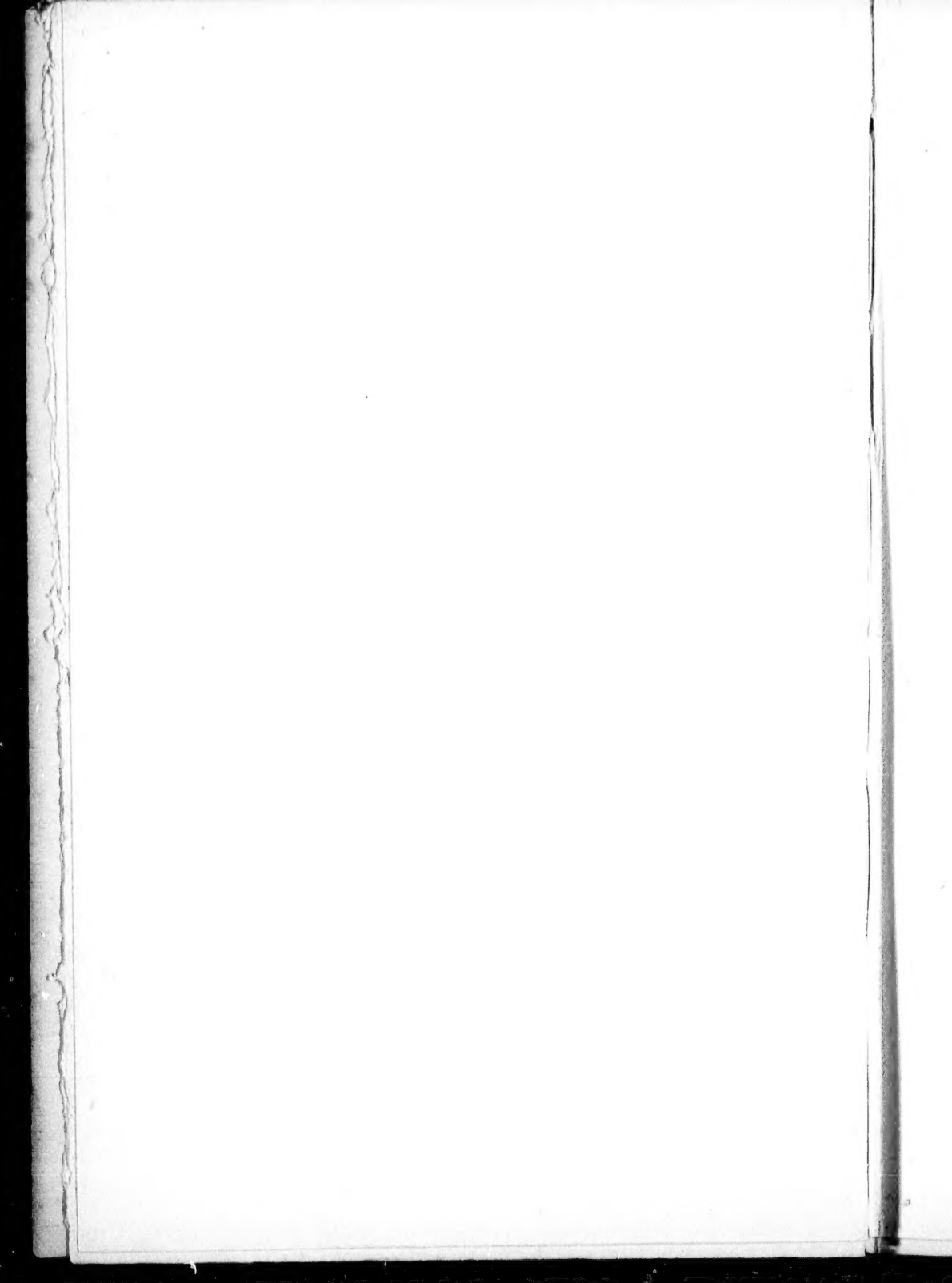
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✓

DEDICATION

*All, all was yours ; no word or thought
Of best endeavour or of daily things,
But had in you its deep and secret springs,
Whence such intarissable flow was brought
To feed my life-stream sparkling on its course,
That it must mount high as a fountain flings
Its spray to find the level of its source.*

*Fair stream from out life's very inmost heart,
Now, where the carven channels overthrown
In wasted lands from ways of men apart,
Where once the rose to fullest joy had grown,
In drifted sands choked and unfruitful sinks,
Nor ever slakes the bitter galling smart
Of desert-thirst that all its fulness drinks.*



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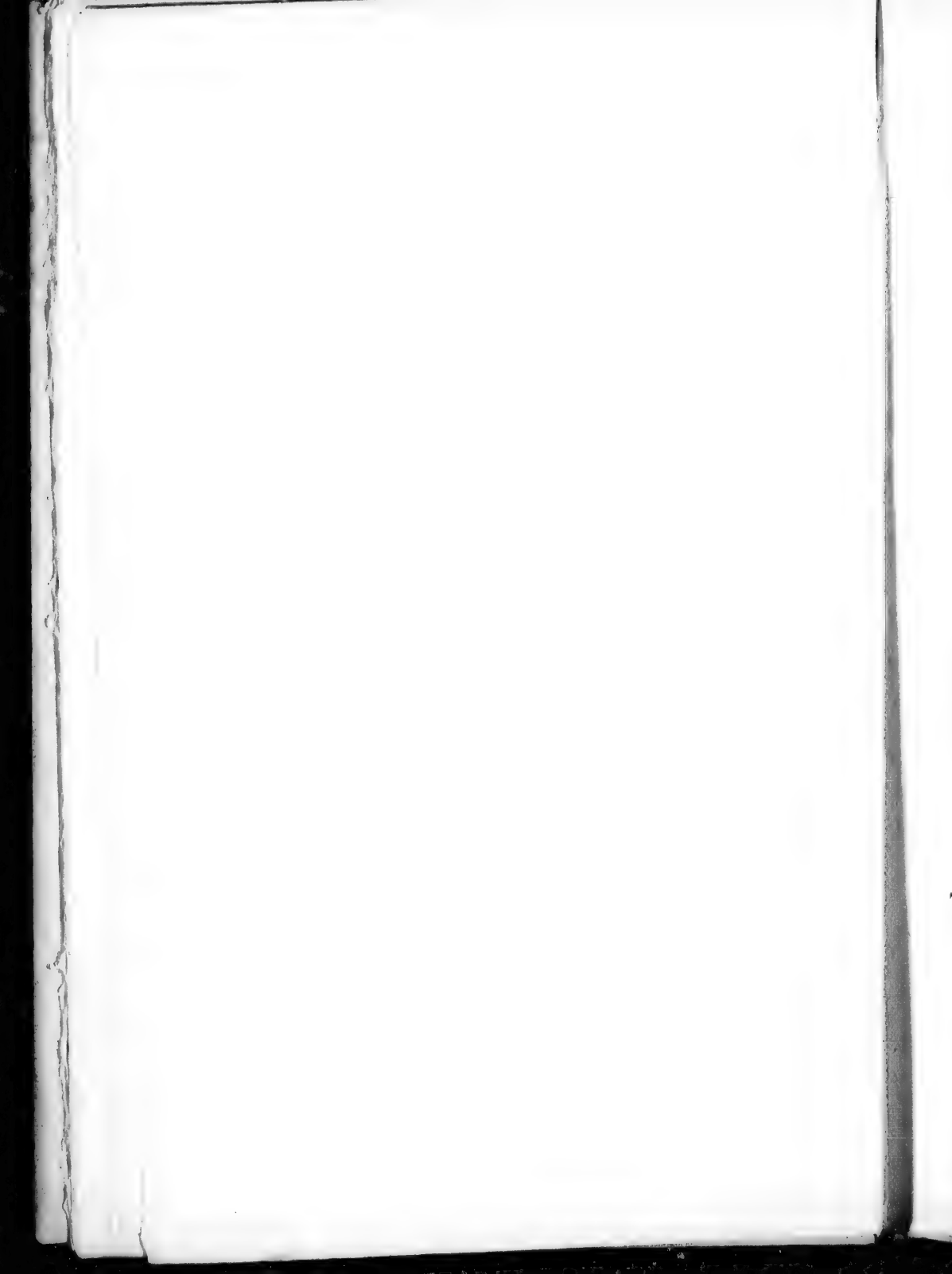
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MILESTONES

A

I



THE YEARS

THEY are kind, the lofty crowned old years
That have fought and hoped and slaved
through the dust,
Resting enthroned now, each with his peers,
For they open their treasure-houses and trust
Their garnered spoil to our hand to spend,
Hailing us sons of their age and heirs
To the grace that their pride of learning lends,
To the glory of arms that aforetime was theirs.

But the years that are coming, the hurrying years,
—Hark to the hoof-beats gathering loud!—
They will ride us down with our hopes and fears,
Trampled and crushed in the driven crowd ;

MILESTONES

The victors they, who conquering ride
As the Scourge of God and his hordes a-lust
For the spoil that their swords with their swords
divide ;

The Way Triumphal has crimsoned dust !
Not for us are they strong and grand,
They will shut us out when the feast is spread ;
Though others sit honoured on their right hand
They will trample our dust where we lie long
dead.

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ad;
nd
ong

I KNOW THE PALE COMPANION

I know the pale companion
Who for my coming stays,
With pilgrim staff and sackcloth gown
At crossing of the ways;
I know the cruel scourge he wields,
I know the prayer he prays!

At close of this day's journeying—
All slowly though I pace—
I look to see him waiting there
Low in the outcast's place,
And mark how torn his bleeding feet,
How scarred and wan his face;

MILESTONES

With what fierce zeal of penitence
The self-wrought lashes score
The back that bows, as though it long
A grievous burden bore ;—
I know him thus whom I had thrust
A beggar from my door !

And I shall see him rising up
My lagging steps to greet,
The sinking sun behind him casts
His shadow to my feet ;
Though I delay, it seemeth he
Hath haste that we should meet !

So turneth he of me unbid
All in his mean array,
To tread with looks disquieting
Beside me on my way ;
I may no longer thrust him back,
Or ever say him nay.

I KNOW THE PALE COMPANION

Wild Flagellant ! with me he fares

My penancer to be,

I needs must take the knotted scourge

And staff he gives to me,

The hair-cloth garb, the bitter bread,

Till I am even as he !

COMPENSATIONS

To stand

Aloft in the doorway of life
Looking over the land,
And the strife
Of the peoples, band against band ;
Horde upon horde
From the dust of their passage emerging,
That famine ever is urging,
Spread abroad
On their immemorial quest
From the East to the West.

To knock

At the guard of the hills,
And unlock
All the treasure that fills

COMPENSATIONS

Earth's stores, since the shock
Rolled the stone,
And the fountains of healing were sealed,
By watching and vigils revealed
To the seeker alone.

To kneel

Where in sepulchred state,
In odorous chambers the long ages seal,
Lie the great,
And with bowed heart to feel
The soft rush
Of unseen and intangible wings ;
Through the hush,
A far voice of mysteries sings ;

To watch

For the glimmering spark
When the need-fires catch—

MILESTONES

Borne on between the dark and the dark,
Sped from hand unto hand—
So to snatch
Light from the token's enkindling brand,
That the glow
Of the beacons may show,
Hill to hill, land to land !

To send

A thought searching forth as the ray
Of a star that shall know of no end,
Till the day
When all in the culminant glory shall blend,
Or in night irremissible merge ;
Thus to purge,
Thus to free from all taint
The soul groping faint
To the far starry verge !

THE OTHERS

Who are they looking all so palely out
From curtained windows closed against the
day,
To watch the passing of our merry rout
Through the thronged streets, beyond the
gates, away?

How cloister-wan they look upon our train,
Which has no need that any say 'Be ware!'
Borne onward eager-footed to the strain
Of pipe and tabor or the trumpet's blare.

MILESTONES

Brothers, turn not for those sick alien looks,
Leave others to the cloister life they choose,
Check not the steed that ill such curbing brooks—
On ! or the spring of morning-hours we lose !

Back through the dusk by one, by two they come,
For whom—since morning passed with them—
we watched,
Stragglers outwearied within sight of home,
With stumbling feet and hand that seeks the
latch.

Be welcome, brothers ! Pass not shamefacedly ;
It was not thus we marked you leading on,
At morning prime, a goodly company,
So high of mien to yield the prize to none.

THE OTHERS

May't please you, brothers, here with us to rest ?

For rest is good, and if you would be gay,

Hence may you see them brave it with the best

—The others passing on their outward way !

THE CLIMBER

UNTO what end have I climbed painfully the
long, steep road?
Stumbling so often to despairing halt,
Mist-dazzled and at fault
To find the path; at prick of the old goad
Once more to rise, to shoulder the old load,
And saying, 'This once more,' between set teeth,
With strenuous breath inheld, to strain
Up where the wrestling winds work all in vain
To clear the summits of their cloudy wreath—
Up! so I see the World and all its kingdoms
spread beneath.
So close my eyes must scan the path I tread

THE CLIMBER

Between the dangers set as in a snare,
I have no backward look till on the mountain
head

Outwearied, sinking down no more to dare,
I seek my recompense, to find instead
The clouds lie folded at my feet and hide
The kingdoms of the World spread fair and wide.
—Even the path of my strong proving gone !
When I would search for what lies hid below,
Of wayside things—scarce noted—there is none,
Nor any wind that brings the failing scent
Of that small crouching heath that one day lent
Its cheer upon my path to urge me on !

THE BUILDING

WHAT do ye bear in your hands, naked hands
to the world,

Ye who pass onward in silence, or banners
unfurled,

Voice the wide-challenging trumpet the passage
to dare,

Unto the building preordinate what one by one
do ye bear ?

Have your hands found aught that is worthy,
found or framed ?

Aught for its beauty or strength when the
Building is named

THE BUILDING

With the name of such might yet unspoken, that
each fitted stone
Shall be given voice to acclaim it in perfect
atone.

Of each the tale of his labours; all of their
travailing bring,
What hands naked-born of the Having unappor-
tioned may wring,
Not one to be spared at the reckoning, unhelped
if unhindered each
With the same bare palms for the hewing that
none know or teach.

Some in shame of their weakness have armed
them with staves,
With stone and with iron unpropitiate delver of
graves,

MILESTONES

And gather the pride of the nations out of the
dust where they fought.

And some counting strength to the weakest have
cunningly wrought

Bonds by the strongest unbroken, spreading a
net and a snare

To hold the striving of nations in hands unflinch-
ing and bare,

Hold till the threat becomes guidance, and the
snare of its meshes yields

Council and wisdom of elders and the strength
that obedience yields.

Others—fewer the telling—secret have wrought
and alone,

Delving deep for the treasure, the hidden and
mystical stone,

Giver of gifts and such power once holden and
proved,

THE BUILDING

That the heart of the people attendant to the
finder is moved,

And throbbing lies in the hollow of the hand
that moulds and makes

Its lustings, its searchings, its terrors as dreams
when it wakes.

From the image of Fear the Beginning—thunder-
sent stone unhewn—

Shaping the Worship of heroes, carving the
magical rune ;

From bludgeoning chance withholding the blow
striking blindly and wide,

Pointing where Reason abideth with laws that
for ever abide—

For desire of the eyes giving beauty of love that
is sorrow's mate,

And peaceful pride that fears not to meet the
enemy in the gate.

MILESTONES

So come ye all to the building—empty hands are
there none,
Even ye unwitting of good or ill done or
undone,
No less than the great who have striven,
agonised, died,
That their work be established for ever—not one
is denied
Place for the work of their hands, be it rough-
hewn or wrought
With the subtle craft that can make it instinct
with the thought—
Be it marble fresh-quarried and virgin, or brick
from the trodden clay,
Shaped and reshaped where the Cities have
wantonèd each in its day :
Even such as would seemingly mar and deface
The plan in its perfect proportions, for all there
is place ;

THE BUILDING

And even those who in madness would have it
wrecked, overthrown,

Unknowing have laboured to raise it, should ever
it stand fully grown

To beauty supreme and perfected, from base to
the loftiest span,

The Building—how named in completion?—the
making of man !

MARCH !

FALL in ! March, march !
Hark to the ring
Of the many feet as you lift to the swing
Of the shouldering start all the column's length ;
Though you choke and parch
In the front-rank's dust,
They are your fellows, there is your trust,
There is your strength !
March, march to the deep refrain
Of the rolling tramp,
The breathings about you, the rattle and stamp,
Time the heart, fill the brain

MARCH

Loud and near,
Or heavy and soft in the rear
Deadened in dust as the summer rain.

Fall out, and all's lost !

Lost is the fellowship strong as the tide
To bear you onwards, once stand aside
And you know the cost !

Cost of dull foot and the lowered beat
Of the pulses ; you choked in the dust,
Chafed in the heat,

And tramp of those who march that march must,
But now you giddily reel for need
Of the next man's shoulder-thrust,
Of the feet that follow, the feet that lead :

Giddily reel, and are struck
With a second sight,
Drearily, wofully clear, spectrally bright,
And you see them all go by as the ruck
Of a seeming rout,

MILESTONES

The column rank upon rank,
Where and why, crawling ant-like and lank ?
If you should fall out !
Light of head, leaden-footed you watch
The far ranks close
Till the faces that pass are of those
You know not, no fellow-glance you may catch :
' Eyes front,' so the long line goes ;—
 Goes, and you pray it may snatch
Your nightmare self back to your place,
Caught up in the dusty track
That is human, though it stifle and parch,
March, march,
Free of your second-sight, your face as each other
 face
' Eyes front ' on your fellow's back !

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Thou Good Samaritan, Pity divine,
Hast still of precious unguents a store ?
Canst still with healing oil and generous wine
Bind up the wound and salve the ulcered sore,
Filling the ebbing veins with twofold life
And strength to rise when worsted in the strife ?

‘What more thou spendest,’ sayest thou !
Wilt thou indeed repay the grudging host
Of him who, when all others disavow,
Thou hast succoured, fainting by the wayside,
lost,
Fallen among thieves and used despitefully ;
Wilt thou again come by in charity ?

MILESTONES

For we have need of more, yea, bitter need,
And still the surly host, thy largess spent,
Hath us in thrall, and ever freshly bleed
The wounds thou bindest with such wise intent ;
Thy simples heal not evils such as ours,
Thy oil soothes not, thy wine hath lost its
powers !

Sweet human Pity, in thy tender ruth,
Wouldst thou beguile us with the salving oil
Of dear delusions in the guise of truth ;
Hold out the recompense of steril toil
And sad renunciation ; wouldst thou still
Pour us such wine our empty cups to fill ?

To severed lives that o'er the grave's gulf yearn,
How promised thou a triumph over time,—
To tortured flesh, eternity to earn,
Wilt thou still hold that torture not a crime ?

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

And through the clash of wars that may not
cease

Wilt whisper still of brotherhood and peace ?

If we have need !—Ah, dear Samaritan,
Come thou but swiftly to the prison inn,
Pay the discharge—if so be any can—
That from our bonds may our enlargement
win,

If aught within thy scrip of coin remain ;
Thy pence for such a reckoning were vain !

YE SHALL POSSESS THE LAND

By right unclaimed we hold it without fee
Or first-fruit feoff, from mountains to the sea,
From sea to hill again we know no lord
Or over-lord to serve in fealty.

And none may keep us from our heritage
Once we are come unto our heirship age,
And none may hold us unto tithe or teen,
Or claim our weapons as base service-gage.

Our lands lie broad for none to have or bind,
Not in vain walls is our pleasaunce confined,
Wide is our range, the outer marches hold
No less than city bounds the good we find.

YE SHALL POSSESS THE LAND

Masters by right of feet that go not back,
Owners by right of hands that shall not lack,
When from the dullards cumbering the ground
A goodly heritage we may win back.

By right of eyes to see beyond all fail
The glory, where the clouds are free to trail
Their idle shadows on the hills, or light
The sea with glimmer of the lost San Graile ;

Through drifting blossom of the apple garth,
Or meadows heady with the aftermath,
Through beechwoods twilight, or wherever
leads
The vagrom impulse of the burnside path.

No less than where, as from the seat of kings,
The warring trumpet world-wide challenge
flings,

MILESTONES

Till wide the gate as to the master stands,
When full and clear the answering echo rings.

Lords of ourselves and over-lords to be
Of such dominion, spreading fair and free,
That none may give in treaty or define
The boundaries by river or by sea.

A SUDDEN MOOD OF MENACE

A SUDDEN mood of menace in the sweep
Of passing clouds that shadow some still place—
A watchful air the brooding forests keep,
And fateful waiting writ upon the face
Of hills that sudden unfamiliar grow,
Will give us pause as if unwittingly
We trod with careless foot where low
A grave untended in the grass may lie.
Then, as divining where some snare is set,
In haste to pass the hidden danger by,
We question not for whom the unvoiced threat
We read in presage of the earth and sky.

MILESTONES

As those forwandered from the forest track,
Turning bemazed in circles wide and vain
Through wilderness unfeatured leading back
So surely to the starting-point again,
Stumble in sudden terror on the trace
Of last night's camp and scattered embers cold,
And see revealed in that deserted place
Their own the tragedy its confines hold ;—
So when the first intolerable sting
Of grief and pain has brought us face to face
With our own fate, beyond all questioning
And all denial well we know the place,
And know for whom the threat before divined
Has found fulfilment, when aloof and cold
The careless skies and hills and woods aligned
Look on the anguish of themselves foretold.

THE HALL OF MANY MEETINGS

‘GOOD-BYE.’ ‘Good-bye. Shall we not meet
again?’

Question too light to wait an answer save when
pain

Whitens a woman’s face perhaps; the question
dies

Where veiling eyelids make the answer vain,
And space already in the hand-clasp lies.

Then at the door to turn
Where lights remote in mirrored vistas burn,
A moment more to feel the rosy glow
Still hold you part of all the over-press
Of warm-breathed air, of roses drooping low,

MILESTONES

Of stir of silk and satin's changing sheen,
Of winking diamond sparks now large now
less,

Where laughter-full a white throat turns to
lean

Back where a man's eyes hazard more than
guess.

But in the pause is warning not to stay—
The outer dark is kindlier than the light—
While the wine warms you still do not delay !
The door has scarcely shut you out of sight,
The crowd is just as close, the talk as gay,
And none will follow you into the night.

ONE WHO MAY NOT GRIEVE

I MAY not grieve when prone, trampled in mire,
All her young graces turned to mockery,
The Past lies stricken—an ill thing to see ;
No hope is there in Purgatorial fire,
Nor may I see from smoke of funeral pyre—
Rich with the savour of dear priceless things—
A future rising up on Phoenix wings,
Less frightening than the stranger who attends
My daily faring : bare of all desire,
Unlovely, reft of the last veil that lends
The hope to find her still in something fair,
With stony eyes and writhen Gorgon hair.

MILESTONES

I may not linger when the iron gate
Of the harsh Present closes on my heel ;
Stern janitress is she, beyond appeal,
Who in her windy porch may not await
The feet of those who would return again ;
For ever set between her sisters twain,
Bars from the Past and thrusts me forth to meet
The loathed Future, whose unwelcome feet
Shall tread by mine in many a thorny way ;
Until I know, in one, the sisters three
Who all implacate rule, a loveless trinity,
And see in that worn shadow chill and grey
My yesterday, to-morrow, and to-day !

LIFE UNTO DEATH

LIFE unto Death made answer, 'Nay, not so,'

When his low summons whispered at the door,
Bidding her yield the house to him and go—

'Nay,' answered Life, 'depart and come no
more;

The house is mine, and dear to me each room,

Where eager guests unto the feastings throng,
Where ev'ry morn Love's garlands freshly bloom,
And where the nights for joy are none too
long.'

Death unto Life made answer when she cried

So urgently his passing feet to stay
And enter where she would no more abide

In desolation—then Death answered, 'Nay,

MILESTONES

It may not be, for that you drove me forth
When I would crave the house, that now so
chill,
Empty, and desolate is nothing worth—
I come but at my time,—content you still !'

EXPRESSIONS

WOLF-HEAD

I saw them halt at fall of night,
I, crouching low
Where the reek of the river-mists hung white
Over the beds of bending rush,
In the shallow flow
Of the rippling ford,
Where I saw the thirsting horses push
Their nostrils spreading broad.

And I saw how rode the enemy
Hot on my track,
So hot he had not eyes to see
The thing he hunted glaring back,

EXPRESSIONS

From the osier-bed
Where the green slime floats,
With eyes with famine-fury red,
As the hunters slaked their dusty throats !

Then through the shadows I could mark
The leader pass
Onward first from the moment's rest,
And to the lingering riders hark
As they roughly jest
On a lad with his lass,
In the closing dark
Ere the steep of the farther bank they breast.

So the town is closed to me now !
To me whom men hunt ;
And the pious monks their sanctified vow,
To succour the needy and wayfaring poor,

WOLF-HEAD

Must break, or they bear the brunt
Of the wrath of the King
For such harbouring,
—Closed is the Sanctuary door !

Closed also the gates of the sea ;
As I starved in the cave
Of the runagate slave—
Whom the price of the Wolf-head would
free—
Timely warning he brought,
Each shipper was held in the port,
None might brave
The word of the King were he balked of his
sport !

Remain to me now but the hills !
Will the gaunt grey beast

EXPRESSIONS

Know his fellow whom man hunts and kills

Without law,

For the priced head and paw,

Or shall the pack feast

On the starved bones that lie

On some lonely peak in the gaze of the sky ?

TOUR D'IVOIRE

AT the casement aloft there by the street's
sudden turning,
In the pure upper-air all a-throb with the chimes,
There's a face looking out—like a pale taper
burning
In sunlight—aloof from men's sorrows and
crimes.

‘Ave Maria!’

'Tis a face to whose oval the gold hair in framing
Lends a halo celestial; the flesh but a veil
For the spirit's perfection—all your carven saints
shaming
In their canopied niche—shows as ivory pale.

‘Rosa Mystica!’

EXPRESSIONS

On the street she looks down, on the town's
sordid sinning,
On the rough men-at-arms swarming out at the
gate,
Mutely craving her prayers for a soul haply
winning
The Heaven she's sure of, for them all too
strait.

‘ Plena Gracia ! ’

Greatly daring even that in the hot haste of
sallying ;
But, returning, who dare show hands stained
with blood,
Or lift eyes clouded by wine-cup or dallying
To a presence as sad as the Christ on the
Rood ?

‘ Purissima ! ’

TOUR D'IVOIRE

That brow pure and virginal, unstained by the
flushing

Of passion's hot flow, to the shame-stricken
heart—

Rebuking the weakness sin's burden is crushing—
Beams remote as a star from Earth's soilure
apart.

‘Immaculata!’

All know her thus to their souls' better saving;
All? Is there one in the throng passing by
Who knows of a heart life's meed ever craving,
Who could tell of a star that may stoop from on
high?

‘Tour d'Ivoire!’

IN THE TENT

WHAT does the Sun give, Mother, little Mother?

Manhood's strength the great Sun gives

Unto everything that lives,

Daughter, little daughter,

So thy pride be not fordone

Beware the Sun!

What does the Moon give, Mother, little Mother?

The pale moon gives evil thought,

Lest thou be a maid distraught,

Daughter, little daughter,

More than the burning noon

Beware the Moon!

IN THE TENT

What do the Stars give, Mother, little Mother ?

The bright stars give magic powers

Of good or evil hours,

Daughter, little daughter,

So that thy life no witch-wife mars

Beware the Stars !

SPHINX OF THE WEST

Is it blood that has sealed your lips, O Sphinx of
the West?

Cruel delicate lips for ever at rest
Closed on the riddle unspoken, unsought, and
unsolved,

On the secret passed beyond hearing as the years
have revolved

Slow, while the death-feeding forest reclaiming
its own

Hides and enfolds your cold altars and gods over-
thrown.

So unseen we divine you, fair as your sister
who gave

Grace to the Aztec nation, child of the Sun and
the Wave,

SPHINX OF THE WEST

Mystic as past without future, fair with the
stricken grace

Of those who perish unfruitful, last of an out-
worn race ;

Feeding your fated beauty with the blood-
drenched altar's reek

As driven by death within you for life in death
to seek.

Well for the world that you found there death
—so your riddle to read,

And passed to make room for the nations given
the world in its need,

Passed in silence unbroken, leaving no story, no
gift,

No treasure the seeking nations from the dust
of the desert may sift.

Fair face of inscrutable maiden—not as the
Sphinx of the East

EXPRESSIONS

Lion-bodied—we guess not the form of the
triple beast

Crouched on the walls cyclopean as heavy still
from the feast,

When last the tall death-temples smoked to the
scourging sun,

And down the glutted altars no more could the
red streams run.

Was it this of the beast within you driving
you here to bide

Death in a hidden fastness foreknown as the
stricken hide?

Was it that of human in you, on your passive lips
a scorn

Of life, the prize of the struggling strenuous
peoples unborn?

What in life was there wanting that you bowed
to exalted death.

SPHINX OF THE WEST

Holding as naught the last heart-beat, the
passing of breath?—

Would you answer now if the question might
rouse you from rest?

‘Death will for ever prevail—exalting the
strongest is best.’

GALLIO

‘And Gallio cared for none of those things.’

DRIVE out the brawlers, pit them Jew for Jew,
If ye are minded, in the outer court ;
So that ye rid us of the noisy crew
That blocks our justice-seat, take ye your
sport,
The match were somewhat new !
But I may not unto such quibbles lend
The time of weightier matters—Go,
Ye wranglers, pray your gods may send
The light ye need, or in the courts below
Have at each other’s throats to make an end !

GALLIO

For to your questions of this name or that

I have no answer, may not arbitrate ;

In Cæsar's name I have not vainly sat

In judgment, on your Law to hear ye prate,

Ye Jews who idly one another rate !

I care naught for such things, so get ye gone.

—The noisy slaves ! And yet a proper man

They haled so ruffian-like before us—one

Maker of tents, with look of one to fan

A people's spark to flame.—Enough ! Who

next, so we be done ?

THE ALRUNA

THERE we shall find her,
The white-wife, the Alruna
In the wood of young fir-trees
Close knit for binding
The grey hills together ;
Where the fir branches, stirred
By the breath of the North' wind
Ring as the harp
In the hand of the Minstrel.

No treasure close guarded
By Dragons that sleep not
Keepeth she hidden ;
No spoil of the Workers
In caves of the mountain,

THE ALRUNA

Gold harness and sword-hilt
Embossed, and the wonder-wrought
Cup for the guerdon
Of Heroes who quail not.

Of her hands she will make us
—Held seemly and cup-wise—
A goblet for drinking
The water that ever
Wells up at her feet
From the springs of the hill-tops.

Of her hair she will give us
Long tresses and golden
For the plaiting of bow-strings
That shall not betray us
In the meeting of heroes.

She hath curiously carven
The Rune of All-healing,
On the stone she hath carved it
Enduring for ever ;

EXPRESSIONS

She will give us the Gift,
But awaiting our coming
Ofttime she hideth
Her face in the twilight
Beholden of no man !

GUILDRON

Guildron hangs up his sword in the Lady Chapel ;
on the blade is graven :

I HAVE asked what I had not
As no beggar whining,
But as claiming my birthright ;
Have been meeted what I would not,
Cringing not as the base-born
Serf to the scourge of the master.
I have given unasked and unstinted,
Filling the measure of justice,
So the gift were worthy the giver
Sought not for praise or contentment.
I have taken what lay for the taking,
Fallen from the weakling

EXPRESSIONS

Or wrenched from the stronger unworthy,
So the Jew and the Infidel furnish
Gifts for Our Lady victorious.

Now I take rest !



IMPERATOR

THIN-LIPPED, loose-throated,
In heavy-lidded eyes that gloated
On sights to shudder from and sicken,
Blood-lust alone had power the light to quicken.

The profile more of vulture than of eagle ;
Though the brow's arch still lends an aspect
regal

To the broad mask, in life impassive
As now you see it in the marble massive.

Blood scenting, ever sneering,
The look that passed as a hot iron searing
O'er many a doomed wretch shrinking
In all his tortured flesh,—as even in thinking

EXPRESSIONS

Such things had been, your flesh but now protested

Against so vile a thing in a like form invested,
And glad to draw a full free breath in knowing
That in the world—save for this marble's showing—

No look meets yours so coldly, cruelly daunting
As that you leave all the chill palace haunting.

CAPRI

THEY died here by the hundred, overdriven
In galling chains that held till death unriven ;
All those slaves, just so much strength for goading
As strength of beasts to bear the cruel loading.
From busy harbour, from rich galley freighted,
Up this steep roadway climbing heavy-
weighted,
Have passed the gangs of toilers unrequited,
Between these walls by fires of noonday
whited,
Till the dazed brain and throat in anguish
choking
Had thought nor cry for any gods evoking.

EXPRESSIONS

As beasts were those who had poured rich libations

And called in fight on gods of many nations.

Fair skins and dark, of noble birth or lowly,

Burdened alike, lashed onwards, mounting slowly

Past town and vineyard, where the mocking vision

Of palace marbles marked their fate's derision,

With carven splendours and the world-sought treasure

Their toil had gathered for the Master's pleasure,

Whose face flashed on them from the guarded litter

Bloated and fierce amid the jewels' glitter.

So toiled they, hopeless, with scarce daily pittance

CAPRI

To feed their toil till death gave tardy quit-
tance.

Worn out and useless did one fail and falter,
There was the cliff-side, and no whit would
alter

In its fixed smile the blue sea closing over
The broken thing its dancing ripples cover !

THE OUTLANDER

Ay ! wag your heads and grin and stare,
Because the dented arms I bear
And garb is other than your own,
Nor chide the boy who picks a stone
To take me unaware !

Mimic my speech with gibe and joke,
With all the zest of timid folk
When safe on their own midden-heap ;
Be bold—beyond my sword-arm's sweep—
To mock my tattered cloak :

And bid your women—as they glance
From shelter of their doors askance—

THE OUTLANDER

Mark the strange forms and runic line
That round my knotted arms entwine
With scar of sword and lance.

Though naught of battle-joys you reck,
Mark how that thrust there on the neck
Nigh sped me to Valhalla's hall
To feast among the Heroes all
Straight from the stricken deck.

For what to you, stall-fatted kine,
Is joy of sword-blade tempered fine
From blood of heroes drinking strength?
Keen as the lightning's leaping length
Played this good blade of mine

Through the hot battle-mists that rise
Blood-red before the reeling eyes;

EXPRESSIONS

Thor's thunder ! but it deeply smote,
The shamle-decks were half afloat
Ere we had gained the prize ;

When foemen reeled in deadly grip,
What time our dreaded Dragon-ship
Had cloven straight her south'ard path
Over the Wild Swan's misty Bath,
And, strong to crush and rip,

Had sunk their galleys in the port ;
Though long the stubborn foe had fought,
Laid low by famine, plague, and drought,
The golden city of the South
For useless quarter sought.

What know you of such cities ? Old
O'erfilled with treasures manifold,

THE OUTLANDER

Temple and palace carven fair,
And gems, and gauds, and spices rare
And ivory and gold !

Golden even the fruits that glow,
Bending where pearly fountains flow,
In gardens odorous and cool,
Where magic dreams the senses fool
With music breathing low.

And I could wager that you deem
This hole of yours must wondrous seem
To a rough rover of the sea !
I, who know well the lands that be
To you a fabled dream.

Nor ever dreamt you of such maids ;
Nor got you on your border raids

EXPRESSIONS

Such slaves, so fair of face and limb,
To fill your goblet to the brim
When the soft evening fades,

With wine in draughts as long and deep
As when the Gods their wassail keep.
Ay, better Gods, I trow than they,
Those pailid ivory Gods whose day
Passed in a perfumed sleep,

In the dim temples, flower-hung,
Lulled by the hymns their vestals sung
—Those maids we took to serve our feasts ;
Nor stirred they, when their craven priests
Dead at their feet we flung.

Many the lands of Gods or King
Wer darkened by the Raven's wing ;

THE OUTLANDER

Strange lands where burning rivers flow,
And mountains flaming through the snow
Aloft their fires fling.

On tideless seas from fairy isles
Comes the soft singing that beguiles
The sea-worn wanderer, where beck
To sunken rock and sudden wreck
The sea-maids' luring wiles.

But I to fools all idly prate !
—Give back there from your River-gate.
Take heed, or you too closely press,
Of yelping curs there be some less
The old Sea-Wolf to bait.

And fare I forth ! The world is mine,
Even where strange stars ye know not shine :

EXPRESSIONS

And shall be held my people's trust.

When all your lands are driven dust

In days that I divine.

For though you mock at it, my tongue

Is that in which the Skalds have sung,

In Sagas old and noble lays,

The mighty deeds of ancient days

When the great Gods were young !

THE BRIDGE OF HELL

THE Signor shall see, though she turns her face
 Aside from us as we cross and meet
At the corner there, where the fine new street
 Opens out of the Market-place,
Where the fruit-stalls crowd at the statue's feet ;

You might say she was blind as the little owls
 The country-folk on their shoulders bear
With the strings of the little birds they snare,
 She has just their blind fierce look as she
 scowls
At the haggling gossips who turn to stare.

EXPRESSIONS

And scarce for a proper bargain will stay ;
Her basket filled, she will silent pass
The girls with their plats of esparto-grass,
Nor even pause on a festa-day
By the showmen's booths all gilt and glass.

And never a glance for the lads who lean
By the fountain's edge, though truth to say
They had rather she did not look their way,
Or they think of a knife-blade cold and
keen—
She has done with their smiles this many a day !

Why ?—As I said, it is plain to see
She bears the sign of the Bridge of Hell,
Where her eyebrows meet you may mark it well ;
It has bridged the way for the souls of three
If all is true that the gossips tell—

THE BRIDGE OF HELL

For Juan held she was his alone,
While the other came at her smile and beck,
Oh, she went gay while he risked his neck,
Till Juan's knife made full atone
For the gold he thought should her beauty deck.

One in his mortal sin to die—
The Saints defend us from aught of ill!—
And one to slave in the Galleys still;
Oh, more than the dead on his soul must lie
The thought of her whom he could not kill!

And she? The Signor has seen how she goes
Lonely to work and lonely to dwell;
The Signor would paint her portrait? Well,
We can see what she says, but every one
knows
'Twere wise to keep clear of the Bridge of Hell!

THE SECTARY

I KNOW not how or whence or why
These things must be,
I only know that thou and I
Must cross the sea,
Unto a far and wintry land
Of wilds untrod,
To join the covenanted band
Elect of God.

Leave idle joys and silken gauds,
Leave song and lute ;
The crowd that still thy beauty lauds
May e'en be mute,

THE SECTARY

For unto me it is revealed—

The burning and the shining light,
That may not rightly be concealed,

Will show more bright
In that far land of forests dim

Where we must fare,
Sheltered in God in serving him
Where few would dare.

Gird up thy loins, in haste to go,
In sober weed,
And flee the wrath to come, for so
It is decreed !

AN EXCURSION

(Rainy weather in the Midlands)

‘THAT way madness lies.’

So well he knew how dangerous the flight
Into the chill of skies still beyond skies,
Our sage so truly human that his sight
Turned from the soulless void to read aright
The human page in all its grandeur, all its
vanities.

When should we look for such another age
As that which mothered him mundane and
sage,

Robust and calm beyond our fretted hopes,
That stimulate faint blood with mimic rage
And borrow all, from creeds to faith in horoscopes!

AN EXCURSION

A patchwork age is ours, for I find
Such phrase as ' little knowledge is a dangerous
thing '

Comes glibly to the purpose of my mind ;
All's said, and we can but the clamorous
changes ring,

And strut to hide the emptiness behind !

Not new the very discontent of us,
For have not toga'd men, and men in mail,
Builders of pyramids, lamented thus ?
No doubt the self-same sorrows to bewail
Met in their caves the men in skins and woad,
Who felt the same inexorable goad,
That time stays not for who may wince or
rail !

Still would we trip up one another's heels,
And scour the very void for some new thing—
Athenian azure heard the same appeals
For what new fortune any wind might bring !

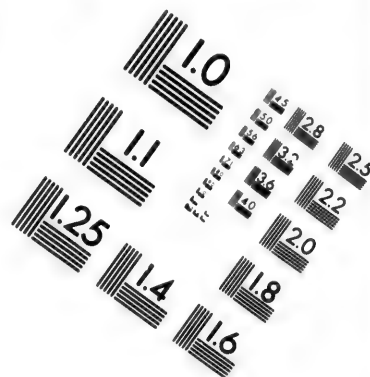
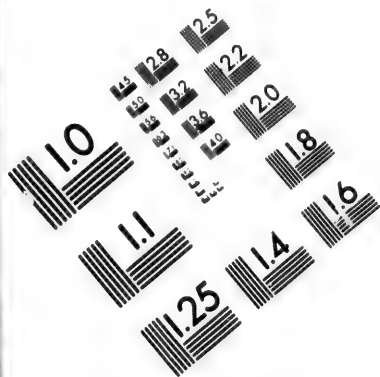
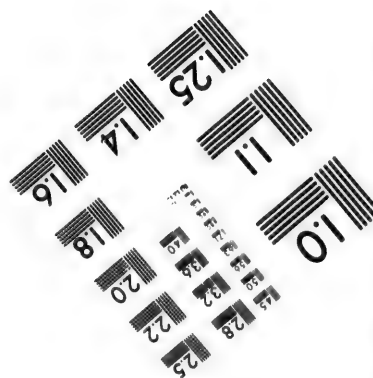
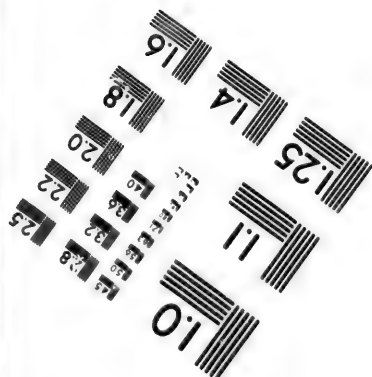
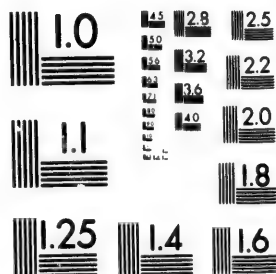


IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)



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10

EXPRESSIONS

As well I think to be
Our grumbling gardener there, with rain-
wise eye,
Straightening bent back and stiff rheumatic
knee
Beside his tulip-beds; space does not daunt
him, it is but his sky
To bring him rain, or may be 'blight and fly.'
It domes, he will admit,
Perhaps as far as to the parish bounds,
—For those beyond small share of benefit!
A personal small sky it is that rounds
The earth so neatly that 'tis not in vain
In drought or flood, when Parson shall think fit,
The parish prays for sunshine as for rain.
Our same good Parson, who just now
Bustling and cheery by the hedge went by
—Unsaddened he by weight of priestly vow,—
Has too, good man, his lien on the sky,

AN EXCURSION

A claim established none may disallow.
Close pressed, however, he will not deny
To others such discreetly portioned share
As may not wrong his own especial care,
Of benefits he formulates as grace ;
But shows a most uncompromising face
If on a closer questioning we dare,
We rash frequenters of the outer space !

So centred, so secure,
We well might envy his sufficiency
When of the callow lustings of the eye
There is not one which we would have endure,
Not one we claim as a world-sickness cure !
He leaves us unenlightened to suppose
His sky to be the crystal-paven floor
Of golden cities that the hymns expose
Ecstatically, where the saved souls close
Their blissful wearied wings at Heaven's door.

He will not traffic since we dared expound

EXPRESSIONS

Our theory we announced as newly-found,
That Christianity is built and based
On the great human principal of Self alone ;
However much the meaning be defaced,
We proved it graven on the corner-stone,
And through its age-long chance and changes
traced

The ceaseless working of the only salt
That never loses savour—here again
A borrowed phrase,—that stirs to life the maim
and halt,

Moulding, 'tis true, with blood and tears and
pain

The Christian freeman from the pagan slave.

Grant the importance of a soul to save,
At once you rise above the millions bowed
Voiceless to Fate, and find the man to brave
All for this self new-nobled and uncowed.
What ! with all the hosts of Heaven arrayed

AN EXCURSION

To prosper its concerns tri. amphantly,
With nature's forces for its furtherance stayed,
Should not this soul-self changeling of the sky
Strut in its inward greatness gloriously ?

What but such self-importance could con-
vince

Man of his right to Heaven's thunderbolts ?
A soul at stake ! a brother might not wince
From deeds of which the very thought revolts
Our nervous age, which seeks no more to turn
All in one mould, though mother-flesh must
burn !

Though done with such ill things, mark you
the glance

Our chapel-faring grocer casts askance
To blast our simple 'sabbath-breaking' mirth !
His sky—to run my fancying to earth—
Concerns itself with no such earthy chance
As simple harvesting or rain or dearth,

EXPRESSIONS

But is as low and grey and mercy-proof
As his own Chapel's low grey-slatted roof;
For foolish virgins of the feast and dance
We see hell-fire plain in his reproof!

A child's night-terrors! but we may be sure
The scourging spirit that is with us still
Lacks, happily, the power but not the will.
Such antitheses side by side endure
In this world's wide duality to cure
What in its working each may work of ill.

Is it this same duality that proves
Earth's failing force beneath the chill of age?
Grown cold towards old hates as to old loves,
No more her inward fires to assuage
To icy rest slow and more slow she moves,

—Here's space again, but much more sure
To bring, for all the fret that cannot mend
The ages' contradictions, certain cure,
When earth's cold shell swings slowly to the end

AN EXCURSION

Of its own exhalations purged and pure !

—And purged therewith of life ?

True ; but what loss when thousand other
spheres

Repeat no doubt the like long tale of strife,
Glory and baseness, splendour, toil and tears,
Made and unmade through the uncounted years ?

—Meantime the world's a comfortable place
From which to make excursions into space,
And always something real when one comes
down

To steady one into a working pace ;
And Kelvin's demonstrations coming on, I'm off
to town.

MISCELLANEOUS

THE FAIR ADVENTURE

I HAVE a thought of one seeming a Nor'land
rover,

Who on such morn as this—midnight and storm
gone over—

Upon this shore had seen a dizzy world returning
To its fixed course, saved by the sea's fierce
spurning,

Alone of all the horde of armed companions
banded

For rapine, lost with the wrecked Long-ship
stranded

Far out there on the reefs and ranks of guardian
breakers ;

—Crouch here among the whins to spy the
inland acres

MISCELLANEOUS

From shifting sands and moss reclaimed by
monkish tillage,
With all their fatness marked by him long since
for pillage.

—Turn him at last sore spent and famine-driven
To Minster gates that, rather, flamed and riven,
He looked to see for him rent wide asunder,
And the shrine's riches fall his Bareserks'
plunder.

No need to parley, scorning mine and leaguer,
When at their name fly the pale monks and
meagre,

And all the store be theirs of treasure olden,
Strange magic books in jewelled clasp, and
golden

Lamps that hold still the incense' heavy savour,
Rich brodered gear, gold cups, flagon and laver.
Grasp all, just given pause where some mild face
angelic

THE FAIR ADVENTURE

Watches enshrined o'er Holy Rood or relic,
With half a doubt lest gods of monkish fable
To smite as his own Thunderer be able.

Not so he comes, of sack and feasting cheated,
Faint, comradeless, at Hospice doors entreated
As best may seem them of their charity
Whom he had thought to smite ; their serf to be
Whom he had fettered ; branded and yoked to
turn

The galling water-wheel and slavish quorn,
Till he forget in round of daily drudging
—A chattel fed by alien hands and grudging—
How he had sailed long since the north seas over
On spoil intent, a conquering free-born rover.

So I, storm-cast from night of deadly peril,
Alien upon life's shores wreck-strewn and steril,

MISCELLANEOUS

Alone must turn for succour, humbly craving
At Hospice doors for my bare body's saving ;
To toil, if so above my fellows serving,
Such better dole be judged to my deserving,
That I may still sometimes have heart for
dreaming

Of how youth's Fair Adventure, goodly seeming,
Launched forth, when banded comrades all
equipped

Loosed the full sail, the straining cable slipped ;
So that I have some scanty toil-wrung leisure
To cheat my fate with gleams of olden treasure
That we had word of, still so closely guarded
In the inviolate Sanctuary warded.

This much I crave, though with the knowledge
bitter,

That, though they yield unto some other, fitter,
Never for me shall the great gates stand riven,
Never their glories to my hand be given !

THE BOAT OF DREAMS

WHERE the faint sea-fires ring the sands
A sudden fitful spark
Is struck by a silent keel that lands,
Unsteered, unsped by rowers' hands,
When the waning moon is dark.

And a boat rocks there of ancient build,
With an empty deck and an idle sail,
That far off-midnight airs had filled,
When the landward breezes sink and fail
And the little waves are stilled.

MISCELLANEOUS

On the night floats out from the laden hold
A scent of the spicy East,
Of treasures from many a land of old,
And western isles where the fabled beast
Keeps guard o'er the apples gold.

Light on the brimming tide she sways,
And the silvered ropes are thrilled—
As the elfin harp of olden days
That ever its magic music plays
Untouched by a minstrel skilled

And a voice with an untold message fraught
Sings on and will not rest ;
The sails with changeful hues enwrought
Swell on the calm as a surcharged breast,
And yearning strain on the world-wide quest
Of the boon the Heroes sought.

THE BOAT OF DREAMS

Or ever the magic of that song
Can win to a listing ear,
It wakes, with a luring spell and strong,
The heart of youth, till one draws near,
Where the boat has waited long ;

Straightly led down the starlit strand
Comes a foot to dare the deck,
The helm yields to the eager hand
To steer—with never a thought of wreck,
On the track of the hero-band.

Far on the stream of the tide's recall,
To those isles of mystery,
Sails the ship with steady topmasts tall,
Led by the jewelled mockery
Of the Ignis Fatuus of the sea,
On the slumberous rise and fall.

MISCELLANEOUS

Oh, sinks or sails the fairy bark,
That waits by the midnight shore,
Who to the magic song should hark
Has dreamed his dream and returns no more,
When the waning moon is dark !

ore,

GIFTS

'Give, give,' and ever 'give,' goes up the cry

Where at her gates sits Life with open hand
To all who daily throng and clamouring stand

About her almoner ; none doth she quite deny
Some dole from her immeasurable store,

Though some bewail that, deaf to their demand,
She turns to give unto another more.

And some would violate her house and wrest
By force of arms a prize beyond their share ;

And in the press are those who do but dare
Snatch from the weak their portion, and divest
Their neighbour of his all when none shall
heed ;

MISCELLANEOUS

And some, not knowing, cast aside the best
That should have stayed them in their bitter
need—

And still the beggar's whine, that is half threat,
Goes up from those who tread each other down,
The shameless 'give!' importunate to drown

Another's plaint who should more bounty get,
And in blind greed would utterly forbid

The few who, asking nothing, yet
Come with their talent in a napkin hid.

And these are they alone of all the press
Who, scorned of beggars, would their tribute
bring

Unto the feet of Life as offering,
So she may have more grace of her largess—

And failing, have for their reward the sight
Of the great few who high above the stress
Have reached to crown her with the crown of
light.

THE MAN FROM PORLOCK

PERSON from Porlock, nameless man,

If it were known, how execrate your name !

Who to our endless loss of 'Kubla Khan'

Upon your dull and trivial business came,
And scattered all the golden store of dreams

Lent by the poet's visions of the night,
That now as Tantalus' own torment gleams

Elusive, but a fragment of delight ;

Nor may we hear the Abyssinian maid

Sing to her dulcimer that unknown song,
That on the poet's sleep such glamour laid

With spells that to the circling spheres
belong,

MISCELLANEOUS

To bear us with him where for ever runs
The sacred river of tumultuous streams,
Lit by no changeful moons, no changeless suns,
Through all the land of witchery and dreams.

Though long in kirkyard rest is laid
The man from Porlock, whose gross ear
Heard not the Abyssinian maid,—
Though he is dead this many a year—
He leaves behind an endless brood
Dull as himself, importunate—
Always too soon do they intrude,
And always go too late !

uns,
ms.

NIGHT IN THE NORTH

BEATEN and burnished bright
The sonorous snows spread white
A pathway untrod from the far ice-realm,
For the Valkyrs ride to-night ;
With twanging of bows in the air,
And flash of their shining hair
As Brynhild's bound by the brazen helm,
Come the war-maids fierce and fair.

From far in the sleeping North
Their mailed bands ride forth,
Greeting the victor, driving the craven
Far as the fret and the froth

MISCELLANEOUS

Blown from the breath of the steed,
Winged with the north wind's speed,
On the Way of the Gods with star-shine paven
Fleetest of Hymer's breed.

Keen as the darts of the frost
Are the countless spear-points tost,
Keen is the sword-thrust to darkness speeding
Those who the fight have lost ;
For heroes the splendour glows
Afar on the crimsoned snows,
To the feast of the gods in Valhalla leading
Where Woden his children knows.

NIGHT IN THE SOUTH

FARE forth, O my song,
To the land that breathes
A cloud of incense the whole night long,
Crushed from the dancers' jasmine wreaths,
Flooding the senses, heady and strong;
From the petals bruised by the cadenced feet,
When one spins out from the swaying rank
Of the wild-eyed music-tranced girls,
Wafting the rose-scent as she twirls,
Swayed to the soft insistent beat
Of the music timing the silver clank
Heard when her anklets meet.

MISCELLANEOUS

Blend softly, my song,
With the wild refrain
Rising and falling the whole night long ;
Throbbing to madness, now low again,
Only sunk to a languorous hush
When the warning clang of the temple gong
Chides to rest ere the dawn-fires flush
And the daylight hours throng.

VOICES

As whispering voices that pass
By the cliff through the fringes of grass,
Secret things the wind discovers,
And the vibrant hills are as glass ;
You think to hear them ring
To the touch of the circling wing
As the hawk on the edge of the chasm hovers
Where never a foot may cling.

The wash of the tideless air
Beats up with the sea's despair,
Beats, and sinks back with its burden weighted
As the voice of unanswered prayer ;

MISCELLANEOUS

Forbid by the hills frowning high,
To the cold inaccessible sky
In a tongue with their common anguish freighted
The Ages disconsolate cry.

Since first to the winds that complain
—Flung out in a protest as vain—
Was blent with the storms that with storms had
striven,
The voice of strong crying and pain,
And the inarticulate earth
In her own unappeasable dearth
Knew the gift of the Gods to her lastborn given,
In the pang of passing and birth.

Out of oppression and wrong,
The weak overborne by the strong,
To the heedless gods of their own conceiving
Crying, Lord, how long, how long?

VOICES

When the sword, two-edged, smote,
The prayer from the dripping throat
Sped with the rush of the spirit's cleaving
Endless in space to float.

Should they break to a clamorous shout,
The stars in a stricken rout,
From their fixèd guard at the gate of Heaven,
Should fail and be driven out ;
And the planets that ceaseless wheel,
From their courses break and reel,
Scattered as dust of a dead world riven
At the sound of that clarion peal !

✓

TREES IN THE FOREST

TREES in the forest straight and tall,
 Claiming the upward way to the light,
Gay with song and the nesting-call,
 Spreading wide in the Sun's full sight,
Crowned with the fulness of life they court
The lusty stir of the wind's wild sport.

Trees in the forest all awry,
 Stunted and pale at the others' feet,
Deep from the sun, the dew, and the sky
 In the twilight green where the branches
 meet,
In the silent strife crushed out of the press
Of stems to suffer the life of the Less.

TREES IN THE FOREST

Trees in the forest dead and dry,
 Leafless, sapless, for nothing good
But to rot into mould where they broken lie,
 To feed the victors that crown the wood,
—While Springs shall come and the Summers go,
Thus do the trees in the forest grow.

THE WOLF TOWER

FROM their lair among the rocks,
Whence long they harried herds and flocks,

The Grey Wolf and his mate are driven,
And their tawny whelps to the hounds are given ;

For the King hath builded a hunting-tower,
Of the stone rough-hewn—no ladies' bower—

In the forest shades for his kingly sport,
For he wearies of the silken court.

But the court to the forest soon must follow ;
O'er Grey Wolf's lair and wild boar's wallow

THE WOLF TOWER

Rise roof and turret and stately hall,
And frowning gates in the circling wall,

Guarding close the garnered treasure
In fair abodes of lordly pleasure.

From distant marts the merchants throng,
And sweet is the note of the trouvère's song :

Nobles and dames at the feast are set,
And famed knights at the jousts are met ;

Anointed kings at the altars bend
Of the holy faith, that their arms defend

With the strength of their hosts for war arrayed,
By Paynim leaguer undismayed.

O'er all the land the sovereign liege,
Strong against secret foe or siege,

MISCELLANEOUS

—Though the passing bell from the Minster-fane
Foretelleth that all life is vain—

The royal city in its pride
Seems it should evermore abide !

The Grey Wolf wakes as he scents afar
The fresh-spilled blood and the reek of war ;

Ravished and torn by brother's hate,
By plague and famine desolate,

The city lies, the gates are riven,
Bower and hall to the flames are given ;

The world-famed shrine, that was ever decked
With lordly gifts, lies bare and wrecked,

THE WOLF TOWER

Naught there stands in the crumbling wall
But the blackened Wolf Tower grim and tall ;

And soon, the ruins all o'erthrown,
With thorns and tangled thickets grown,

—All save its name by men forgot—
In the forest shades of that desert spot,

The ancient Wolf Tower stands alone,
With the Grey Wolf's lair on the cold hearth-
stone !

CHANTEY

Give the wind time to blow a man home,

O—ho! O—ho! e. —O!

Give the wind time to blow a man home!

Is it time that the wind wants, time!

Sure we have given enough,

For our spars are crusted with rime,

And our keels drag fouled and rough;

While we wait the wind's good time trim and
tauten the slack,

And ready all when the wind shall haul at last
on the homeward tack!

CHANTEY

Give the wind time of the years,
That drive with us round and round,
From the port our lading clears
To the port where we last are bound ;
Must it still have time, while we lighten and load,
again to come
With pratique free of every sea ere it minds to
blow us home ?

We have given it time wind-bound,
Under a shifty lea,
Time when we could not sight nor sound
In a berg-encumbered sea,
Time when the trailing smoke of a hull-down
liner mocked
Our jack reversed, when the deals had burst our
decks and the pumps were blocked.

MISCELLANEOUS

We signed for the round when we shipped
—Shanghai'd never a man—
And we knew, when the signals dipped
And the pilot shoreward ran,
That the wind had the word, we must sing to
reefing or crowding on,
Or, yards a-dip, all hands to strip ere ever the
masts had gone.

'Tis we cry 'time!' when it shifts
Aback against the sun,
Dog-dancing through the tattered drifts,
Time to reef and run,
Ere the squall shall break and the scuppers
fill,
For 'tis sea-room then for the sailor-men and the
wind may have its will!

CHANTEY

Has it no mind of how it drove
The racing outward-bound—
Oh, those were the days of treasure-trove
And pearl-isles newly found !—
That strained and bilged and battered it leaves
us here forgot,
In the parallel that tastes of Hell to roll and
rust and rot !

We have only the wind to trust
—Sailing the world around,—
If our thirsty anchor, dry with rust,
Shall ever again hold ground,
Where it held—too long for our fancy—what
time the harbour mouth
Was the gate set wide to a world untried clean
new from North to South !

MISCELLANEOUS

But for all that its ways are long,
It will not have us forget,
And pipes an unforgotten song
Sometimes when the watch is set,
And no one aft but the steersman: steady and
free it blows;
There is naught to do but keep her true on the
course that the wind best knows!

*Then give the wind time to blow a man home,
O—ho! O—ho! ee—O!
Give the wind time to blow a man home!*

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MIGHT THE DEEP WOODS

MIGHT the deep woods ever hold me
In their cool embrace,
And the grasses droop to fold me
Hiding my still face
Far from all that has controlled me
In some long-forgotten place !

Might the sea's compassion take me
On its farthest tide,
In some primal form remake me
Where I might abide,
And no resurrection wake me
From the depths where I would hide.

MISCELLANEOUS

Best if so be I might loose me
In the trancing snows,
Might some fatal snow-maid choose me
Where all things repose,
Nor the endless night refuse me
Sepulchre where no man knows !

All the fair free things that made me
One with their deep heart,
As a friend's hand have betrayed me,
Leaving me no part
In the strength that long has stayed me
Through life's fret and smart.

In my helplessness to leave me
To the hands I dread,
Of my birthright to bereave me,
Stone at foot and head
In the close-walled vault to leave me
With the sordid dead !

QUIBERON

(La Vendée)

FAINT and far the sounds that come
Upon the salt wind fleeting,
From the chill void of the sea-fog where the
shrouded beaches end,
Bugle-call and roll of drum
And hiss of swords in meeting,
Charging shout and choking death-cry with the
call of sea-birds blend.

From what hosts set rank to rank,
In curling fog-drift hidden,
Comes the clamour of the onset; whence the
stress of flying feet

MISCELLANEOUS

Of those smitten front and flank,
Borne backwards, over-ridden
Through the trampling of the breakers in pursuit
and retreat ?

What retreat from closing snare
Can be beyond the seething
Of the foam-fret down the pebbles drawn sharply
sucking back,
When through the vapour-deadened air
—All the sea and shore enwreathing—
Sounds the quick impatient drum-roll urging the
attack ?

Silence with grim menace filled,
Ere down the wind there follows,
Blent with the rush of unseen waves, the distant
musket-roll,

QUIBERON

And all the vacant cloud-world thrilled
Through changing capes and hollows
With the chill breath of fate-laden ball sped
blindly to its goal.

Is that the waft of battle-cloud,
Whence the fusillade had blasted
The last despairing rally to a pallid stricken
rout ?

Is that the tread with terror loud
Of wounded steed unmastered ?
Is that the lilied banner, shot-riddled, streaming
out ?

You look to see the fog-walls part
To the peasant flock, man-hunted,
Who to the boats that wait them not, still vainly
strive to flee,

MISCELLANEOUS

And the little band of higher heart,
With faces all foe-fronted,
If die they must, die self-avenged beside the
 trait'rous sea.

But ever as the shrill sea-wind
Rolls back the shredded curtain,
From all the ragged sand-dunes where the reeds
 grow dry and few,
The driven fog-wreaths torn and thinned
To your doubting eye uncertain,
Show a lonely shore untrodden that the tides
 have swept anew.

By tumult of the headlong flight
The silence hangs unbroken,
No useless arms, no wreckage of the fight, bestrew
 the sand,

QUIBERON

To farthest foam-fringe gleaming white
There is no sign nor token
Of those who met their fate betrayed between
the sea and land.

As on that day of whetted sword,
That smote and gave no quarter,
The shrouding fog had hid a sight whereon no
sun had shone ;
On all the sand spread fair and broad
There is no stain of slaughter,
No trace of blood that once had fouled the beach
of Quiberon.

THE JUGGLER

THE Juggler, prince of the Fair
By his skill, plays with his golden balls—
Rainbow-like, red, blue, and green—
With a knife thrown up between ;
Never one of them breaks or falls
As he keeps them playing high in air.

Merrily—they never stop,
Like a fountain's sparkle up and up
To the sunshine flung.
'Twould seem they hung
Just a moment, then, as to a cup
True to his hand they drop.

THE JUGGLER

While we watch them all agape—
To the big drums and squeal of fife—
 Wonder will he let them down,
 He is such a skilful clown
'Twould seem he had come to give them life
 In his motley suit and cape.

It was never known that any fell
While the Juggler, prince of all the Fair,
 Plays with the balls of rainbow hue,
 Red and gold and blue.
And he will keep them high in air
 Just as long as he thinks well !

THE NAVIGATORS

IN ebb and flood from East to West
The swinging tides that know no rest
Call, call, call,
And deep sea-streams from West to
East,
'Up, leave your warring, mart or feast.'
The winds that blow from North to
South
By harbour bar and river mouth
Call, call, call—
With answering voice from South to
North,
'Unto the great new world come forth!'

THE NAVIGATORS

And they who heard had in their blood
Such springs of roving hardihood
From Sea-bride and from Viking sire,
That answering leap to fullest flood
In pulses of their own desire.

Drawn Westward still and ever West,
Where fabled Islands of the Blest
Ever below the sea-line lay,
Strange portents cheered them on the quest
Of Eldorado and Cathay,

And to the sea's low message gave
The voice of every westering wave,
The longing of their soul to urge,
And bid them follow on to brave
The hidden things of ocean's verge—

MISCELLANEOUS

The hidden, strange, and desperate things,
Of which the sea-voice message brings
From shores of far mysterious lands,
Reached only by the sea-birds' wings,
Known but to ocean's roving bands ;—

To follow far and free as these,
The masters of unsounded seas,
Where ' the great Whales and Dragons ' go,
Where plunging breakers fall and freeze
In phantasms of ice and snow,

On phantom palaces a gleam
Through mists upon the ocean-stream,
Guarding the secrets of the shore,—
If it be but a fabled dream
In shadows wrapped for evermore,

THE NAVIGATORS

Or show as to their inward sight
The future they could read aright,
The savage beauty caught and tamed
Grown mighty in the mother's might,
The lands they sought and named.

The rivers that from East to West
Had borne them forth upon their quest,
Call, call, call
To the great streams from West to East,
'Father of Rivers,' or the least
That flowed to slake their bitter drouth,
Storm-beaten, driven North and South—
Call, call, call ;
And might they hear them now as then,
Far from accepted ways of men,
Call, call, call,
It should be given them to know

MISCELLANEOUS

That these long centuries moving slow
Had wrought their endless fame,
Where the great fleets of ocean go
Call their undying name !

VOTIVE

MIDSUMMER DAY IN THE GARDEN

I COULD rend them all, and crush
The red heart of every rose,
Where the love-life's fullest flush
In each taunting blossom glows !
Cruel, cruel seems to me
All the Summer's bravery !

Such a wanton waste of life !
All the strength that riots here
Hath an outrage—even as strife—
That I would not came anear
To the dim room where he lies,
Still, enwrapped with close-sealed eyes !

VOTIVE

Flowers like these can have no part
In the calm of that low bed ;
Where is stilled love's very heart,
Love's own flowers may not shed
Their bright petals just unfurled
To the joyous summer world !

Scorching even the boon of tears,
Harsh upon my eyelids burns
All the splendour that the years
Deck the earth with, as she turns
With her full heart brimming over
To the Sun as loved to lover.

They will give me thus to know
How a maimed and alien thing
I for evermore must go
Through the harvest-joys and spring,
Where no part nor lot have I
Under all the smiling sky !

MIDSUMMER DAY IN THE GARDEN

O garden of the Earth, that was
My Eden wheresoe'er we twain
Might through the flush of morning pass,
And watch across the fields of grain
The dancing ripples break and run
Before the wind that backs the sun ;

Or feel the evening calm exhale
Our soul's true essence to the stars,
In love-plaint of the nightingale
Caged in the moonbeam's silver bars,
In cypress alley lingering late
To hear him still entreat his mate ;

Or clinging lean along the edge
Of walls that keep a mighty name
Alive, where from the mountain's ledge
The voice of winds still trumpets fame,
And long for deeds of high emprise
To crown us in each other's eyes !

VOTIVE

Fair pleasaunce that was his and mine !

No Angel with the flaming sword
Doth shut me from your dear confine

To wander desolate abroad,
But the chill sentinel of doom
Who watches in that silent room !

NOLI ME TANGERE

Is it that still so thinly veiled I go
That they may see my face
—So changed beyond all that they used to know—
Doth but grimace?

When it would keep the trick aforetime learned
Of answering smile to smile,
And pay the courtesy its patience earned
So long a while?

Is it because the life within them shrinks,
Guessing from scars I would not have them see,
The maiming stroke, the loss that ever links
Two worlds in me,

VOTIVE

That I can see the gulf between us set
When I would tread their ways,
And feel the chill when hand to hand is met
As in old days ?

So through the busy world of fret and mirth
I follow spirit feet,
As through a show—how vain !—where Death
and Birth
For ever meet.

And part to meet again, nor ever cease
The while I closely hold
The hand whose clasp I never may release
That is so cold !

I WOULD NOT, DEAR

I would not, dear, you might return
To this changed world so grey and old,
Where no more from the headlands burn
The beacons now for ever cold.

I would not have you know the weight
Of ventureless long days I know,—
Ah, love, where once we used to freight
The hours as ships that come and go

On all the tides the world around,
To wide new lands and kingdoms old,
With treasure no more to be found,
And goods no longer bought or sold.

VOTIVE

Dearest, when first I saw the Spring
Send the sea-swallow by your grave,
It had an added pang to wring
Anguish from lips that could but rave

Against all nature, you being gone
From the bright world we loved so well ;
I knew not then you were the one
—Not I—who should be left to dwell

For ever on the enchanted shore,
Where youth and love had made our home,
Where on your dear face never more
The change of the grey years may come ;

While I should see unmeaning things
Drift by through all the heavy years,
Till to strange shores the spent tide brings
The ship that by no beacon steers.

KNOWLEDGE

WE knew you then as one beyond

The fretful round of petty minds,
As one whose word is as his bond,

Whom duty's sudden summons finds
Full-nerved unquestioning to respond,

In high simplicity that takes

No thought of self to strive and thrust,
But moves in quiet strength that makes
The code of manhood's highest trust
Which never true man breaks.

Too great the cost that shows us now

How the high purpose of your will
In unrevolted strength could bow

Gently in patient pain and still
Meet death with such unclouded brow !

OUT OF TUNE

SPRING has no message for me this year !

Never a note of the blackbird's song,
From the swaying elm-tops shaken clear,
Has aught of meaning now to my ear ;
The lengthening days—how long !

' An oft-told tale,' so it vexes me

The stir of building each foolish nest
As the first that were built, when plain to see
Hang last year's shreds in the very tree !
Do they take last year's bequest ?

Buds on the branches just the same,

With an inch of growth to make good the fall

OUT OF TUNE

Of those that furnished the Winter's flame !
Perhaps when the fiery moment came
Glad to be done with it once and for all !

But oh ! the lilies springing to greet
The sun just where last year's blossoms did !
Will they have the same perfume — God
forbid !—

As those with all last year's essence sweet,
That died in a room of death, and hid
The dear folded hands, the dear still feet ?

SOME ASPECTS

V

LOVE IN CHANGE

Our love against the world ! we said,
 Counting so full, so wide of scope,
The love of untried lad and maid,
 True sisterling of Faith and Hope ;
Counting so strong, so free of range,
 The callow love we sought to prove
Beyond all chance of Time and Change,
 For naught, we said, can change our love.

Sweetheart ! to-day have you a smile,
 Have you a thought for what must seem
The palest phantom to beguile
 The yearning of a lad's sick dream,

SOME ASPECTS

Beside the love that holds us now

Strong as itself, in no way kin

To Faith in need of any vow,

To Hope for sake of aught to win ?

The very Change we so defied

Has wrought more surely for our good,

Though stern of hand and reaching wide

Beyond the simple arts we wooed ;

And had it not to us revealed

All we had missed, O true heart mine,

What had we known of love so sealed

By Time and Change, deathless, divine !

LOVE IN TRUTH AND COURTESY

SWEET, I have lived to see you go !
And had I in those stricken moments prayed,
It had been for myself—that so,
Since all my anguish had in nowise stayed
Your going, might one mortal pang suffice
To speed me with you undelayed :
I had prayed thus, so that I die not twice.
O Love ! But I live still,
And to the living must my strength apply
—Since flesh and spirit may not part at will—
As your unshaken soul gentle and steadfastly
Has taught me so to live and so to die.

SOME ASPECTS

This have I to my comforting and cheer,
That though the world stops not for such as I,
And gives to each but one true life—a year,
Perhaps a score !—it gave me that most dear,
Most courteous love, if holden worthily,
The ‘perfect love that casteth out all fear.’

as I,
r,
ear,

LOVE UNTIMELY

DEAR, we were too soon met and too soon parted,
Time was not ripe that our love should endure,
We did not know love left us still whole-hearted
With but such gentle hurt as time might cure.

Dear, it was very sweet the while it lasted,
The wonder of it will not come again,
Though we can smile to-day to think we fasted,
And could from such a feasting still abstain !

Yet glad that we can still look back to cherish
The sober charm half sad of all young things
Untimely blossomed, which, untimely perished,
We'd fondly grace with wafting angel-wings !

SOME ASPECTS

Whose very frailness makes us over tender
Of weaklings that we only hold more dear ;
And I, for one, could never be offender
Of such young-hallowed things dead many a
year !

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any a

LOVE IN REASON

THEN you would let me go without a word,
Without one look from those changed eyes
averted

The while in silence you have heard
From me the tale that others had perverted ?
So, hug your woman's justice to your heart,
But blame me not when you shall feel the smart !

Believe me, you are hard, armoured in youth :
More years had helped you udge in other
fashion,
Though I did wrong, perhaps, such draughts of
truth
To pour for one who at life's wells of passion

SOME ASPECTS

To merest surface-froth had scarce set lip;
Where I so deep have drunk, you lightly sip.

Would you then rather I had made a mock
Of simple truth, my manhood's birthright
selling;

Would rather, than that aught your taste should
shock,

Have such a death's-head ever with us dwell-
ing?

Though truly, to a woman, out of sight
Is out of mind—who knows but they are right!

But I know well I am too much a man,
As such you think inclined to hold too lightly
What you call manly failings and so ban—

But grant me to hold truth and honour rightly!
And love, the love that I would have you under-
stand,

With truth and honour must go hand in hand!

LOVE IN REASON

But you will none of it in your young scorn ;

To me the fault now lies in the confession,
So deep my love within my soul is born

It would have urged me to make full con-
cession

To all the prejudice that you inherit,
And of the base surrender make a merit.

Had I not judged it baser to degrade

The finer attributes that you discover,
And hoped you were for higher usage made

Than to hold dear a man less man than lover !
But since of such high hopes disaster came
To cause you grief, dear child, mine be the
blame !

And mine the loss and bitterness to know

That it were better far for us and safer
To venture where the angels pause, and so

To swallow whole Love's consecrated wafer,

SOME ASPECTS

In firm belief that in its form may dwell
His very substance, so that all were well !

Forgive me !—But acknowledge it must make
Parting on this wise not a little bitter
To think, as is most natural, you will take
Into your heart some other you deem fitter,
Or who may pass as such to your contentment,
While I for ever bear your just resentment.

Now to make end ! As from your life I go,
Of all the sorrow that my haste is earning
Much is for you, though you 'll not have it so—
You might have, had I left to ripe discerning
The love that I have dared to price too high
For your acceptance as it seems—good-bye !

LOVE IN MADNESS

. . . LOVE still were mine,
Were Love not dead, poor little helpless Love,
Whose blood is red and sweet—ah! sweet as wine,
Staining pale lips and golden curls above
Among the scattered feasting where we sat ;
—Say, was the wine too rich, too red,
And over-heady, friends, for your fine taste,
That so untimely from the feast you fled
Shrieking on justice in such pallid haste ?
No need for justice, once I had seen *that*,
—The look between them when eyes woo and
wed—

SOME ASPECTS

Justice lay in this small dagger-point—ay, and
to spare

For him who lies so stiffly huddled there !

You call me, then, an over-lavish host,
And yet you come not where still waits the
cheer

I spread you of my best—I would not boast !—
Good friends, why draw you back, why peep and
flee

In at the doorway garlanded for joy
And honour of Love's coming ? Friends, a toast !
Drink with me of the wine that cannot cloy.

Fools ! you do not know this vintage rare,
You do not know the suns that poured their
heat

Into the living sap of vines that bear
Such fruit for crushing—so—beneath the feet,
Through tender hours you know not grown so
sweet

LOVE IN MADNESS

To yield this joy ! Out, slaves, nor ever think
To your base usage would I so defile
The wine that I will pour—a godlike drink—
For Love alone—and Love lies dead the while
With pale lips that have got so strange a smile !

LOVE UNMATED

You to your joys as I found you unsated,
I to the will of the world again !
The love that could hold us for ever unmated
Is love unworthy, steril, and vain.

Should we have given our all unstinted—
All that we had of ourselves to give,
Still would the whispering doubt have hinted
Love must have more for its meed to live.

Give if you will, but is not receiving
Blessed as giving from heart to heart ?
Else is it all beyond mending or grieving,
Loving unmated, we love apart !

LOVE UNAVAILING

HEAR me, beloved, if you may

Still through the sounding vaults of space,
Where day from night and night from day
Robs something of your lingering grace :

Hear me, beloved, speak your name

As I was used to breathe it low
When by the twilight path I came
Unto the door we used to know.

We ! where now alone I stand,

And call your name for none to hear,
The roses droop on either hand
As they have done since that dead year

SOME ASPECTS

When on the threshold overgrown
 With grass now rank as churchyard sod,
I drew the latch so long well known
 And took the path so often trod,

Unthinking I should ever call
 Your name unanswered low and fond.—
Ungathered roses fade and fall
 By the closed door, space lies beyond !

sod,
nd.—
nd !

LOVE IN JUSTICE

THE low grey wood that cringes from the sea,
The low grey rocks still stubborn to its
scourge,
The shivering pale sands that break and flee
As the long lashes of the sea-wind urge ;—
All is the same, and we,
As when we saw them first, have come to stand
Once more together, and here face to face
Set Love between us, as we still should place
A docile hand each in his clasping hand.
To-day no blindfold band
Hides the changed eyes of Love between us set,
The changed cold eyes wherein we shrinking
read—

SOME ASPECTS

As we before him were for judgment met—

The sentence of the years he has decreed.

Never again to lead

Our feet in pleasant places will Love turn ;

Who joined us, sunders now and bids us go,

As justicer between us high and stern,

Our separate ways, waste for all winds to blow,

All waves to spurn.

LOVE IN SECRECY

‘Your servant, Madam.’—‘Sir, give you good-day.’

And each along the formal terrace-walk
Rustling and stately take their separate way,
Where buzzing courtiers pausing in their talk
Ogle and spy, the while they bowing sway
To favour’s breeze as poppies on the stalk.

‘Lord of my life!’—‘Thou very heart of love!’
Close-meeting lips breathe through the folding
dusk,
In that long-awaited moment, when above
Only the stars where roses shed their musk
May spy the pair, who through their Eden move
—This is life’s fruit, all else were but the husk!

LOVE UNTHRIFTY

Oh ! the cup of life brimmed high
When we drained it, you and I,
Drained, nor ever thought to find it
Empty in our hands and dry.

Lip to lip upon the edge,
So we answered, pledge for pledge,
Through the rose-wreaths now so withered,
Dead and dry as autumn's sedge.

Shall we no more thirsting drink
Where the breaking bubbles wink
On the rim, no more our fingers
Round the stem together link ?

LOVE UNTHRIFTY

Did you think to wreath again
Garlands that in dust had lain ?
Did you think to fill the goblet
To appease your longing vain ?

Nay, sweet friend, it may not be ;
Never more for you and me
Shall be poured the wine we wasted,
Brimming, sparkling, full and free.

LOVE ENCAGED

O LOVE! if it be Love may set me free
From bars and bolts of iron circumstance,
That, wide or narrow as the cage may be,
Is strong to hold us as in evil chance !

But Love fears not with snowy plumes and breast
To bring forgetfulness of close-clipped wing—
So there be room to preen and brood and nest,
Love is content behind the bars to sing !

LOVE IN SURETY

I KNOW one may in nowise question Love,
Or at the word he will take quick offence,
If we should ask for miracles to prove
His saving grace for which we are too dense ;

But, dearest, let us keep with daily care
Gentle observances as we are used,
So we have not to ask ' Is Love still here ? '
And seeking signs and wonders be refused.

Let us from dulling usage save and tend
Such suite and courtesies as years go by,
For Love's contentment, so that in the end
We lose him not for very surety !

LOVE IN LONGING

THROUGH the long cool meadow grasses,
By the hillside thrilled with song,
Where the full-flushed morning passes,
And the drowsy noon sleeps long—

Where the wistful evening lingers
As the ebb to flow repines,
And the night with dewy fingers
Sweeps the chords of murmuring pines :

There am I, beloved, throwing
All my heart, my soul to these,
So you may not stand unknowing
By the shore of alien seas—

LOVE IN LONGING

All that we so loved together,
 Harbouring days that we have blessed,
Truant noons among the heather,
 Nights that held our hearts at rest—

So they may but reach you, dearest,
 Through the chance of far-off skies,
Telling you my love lies nearest
 Where your own love nestling lies.

28 25 22 20

10

LOVE IN MOCKERY

WE crown you queen, and of that crown make
light,

And claim you newly risen Aphrodite
From out the wastrel of the sea and shore,
Where dripping weeds and pebbles jewel-bright
Deck forth the shining limbs that gleam the
more,

And bow we to the thing our hands have raised ;
A jest grown sudden tragic when we find,
Among the attributes such homage praised,
One in which Love himself—whom they call
blind !—

Through our light mockery such grace has found
To teach—for better worth of human kind—
That what you are may still by Love be crowned.

LOVE IN REVELATION

No breath throughout the night, no stir of air
In all the olive-orchard tented roof,
Woven of shadows for their safe repair,
Whence night's innumerable small musicians
 trilled
Their best a moment since, now sudden stilled ;
Even our nightingale to brood aloof
Forgoes his melody of sweet despair,
And silence hangs between the two great darks
Of earth and sky, as each drawn through the
 dewy damp
In force unknown, primal and vast and musingly
Awaits the other. Is it this moment marks

SOME ASPECTS

A pause, as it were, in the long steady tramp
Of legioned hours marching ever by ?
Just made for us, as silent you and I
On terrace wall together leaning wait
What through the hushed expectancy draws nigh.

Ah, love ! in shelter of my arms enfolded strait
To meet such moment manifest you did not
fear !

Bowed to the hand compelling to its will,
We veil our faces, knowing love is here
In the soft breathing that enfolds us still ;
Though your flushed cheek felt no cool touch of
breeze

Between that unifying kiss and these,
Throughout their fruited branches interlaced
A long sigh shivered all the olive-trees ;
It seemed each gnarled old trunk was braced,
Made sturdier in every ancient twist,

LOVE IN REVELATION

As pillars of night's precincts to resist
The grip of some blind Samson's strength de-
based,
And to uphold the portal of the shrine
Touched by the passing visitant divine.

This little moment, love, our very own,
So great, so charged with destiny was grown
Above its fellows, an especial birth
Fitting it were some portent should make known ;
Too rare for loud acclaim or simple mirth,
That Earth herself must stand at, gaze, and yield
With sudden tremors her acknowledgment
Of the resistless forces it could wield,
Welding two lives indissolubly blent.

Listen ! one small musician tunes to make
Trial of what the shaken silence willed,
Until night's orchestra takes heart to break

SOME ASPECTS

To fullest jubilation piped and shrilled,
Each of his fellow's powers emulant,
Launching the nightingale our celebrant
Upon his triumph-song of love fulfilled !

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ed!

LOVE BELATED

I WOULD have you sit as you used to do
In the window-seat to look
Down on the square, where two and two
Pass the students with gown and book,
And see the light touch as it used
On the curve of your cheek and neck,
Catching a careless curl unloosed
With a sudden golden fleck.

And I would that the harsh old lock might yield
To my hand with its protest vain,
That you would not hear if the Carillon pealed
Like a burst of golden rain

SOME ASPECTS

From the ancient belfry you so loved,
For the chimes that ward all harms,—
I might reach your side ere you had moved
And turned with a cry to my arms.

And I would—oh, I would that the heart of youth
Might be mine again for a space,
That I might annul in very sooth
The years that blur your face
When I try to recall your smile, your eyes,
As they were, for now I know
That my pride had lost me so rare a prize
In the days of long ago!

LOVE UNKNOWNING

WHEN from the meadow-side where lapped we
lay

In ample vesture of the lavish Spring,
We glimpsed one passing by the woodland way
As through his own, where soft the whirl of wing
And amorous song acclaimed him very king :
Strange was the look he cast, as who might say
With regal gesture, 'Take the good I fling,
Lose not your day !'

Had I but known him, caught his meaning so
—As now I know and of the knowledge weep—
That Spring, of all to come, of all that go,
Had been our own to have, to hold, and keep,
To fill our lives with the undying glow
Of glories that through all the woodland sweep ;

SOME ASPECTS

Had I but gathered when one passing by
Strewed goodly gifts that turn to ill from good,
As gathered wind-flowers fall and withered lie
To sadden all the festal-keeping wood,
—Ah ! that, of all the endless Springs that
brood

The years to quicken yet when life beats high,
Had been our own, ere yet the wind-flowers die,
Had we but known 'twas Love who meant our
good !

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rom good,
hered lie
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cats high,
-flowers die,
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LOVE UNASKED

His look would shame me should he but divine—
Though he may think it makes too brave a
show—

How great the cost in answering look of mine
To beat the hot blood down, keep pulses slow.

In me all womanhood were surely shamed
Did he once feel through all the seeming calm
The storm sweep through me when his name is
named,
The thrill when hands meet lightly palm to
palm

SOME ASPECTS

And even love through me were made a mock,
For who is there would hold it not a jest
To see as to a stone, a very stock,
Such precious offerings in vain addressed !

If he himself were shamed it were not well ;
If I have read his courtesy aright,
An idle tale that careless gossips tell
Were shame to him if working pain or slight.

Of shame my strength !—ah, weakness were
more sweet !—

To have him see in me but one aloof
From all his ways, to part still as we meet,
Of such a strength makes daily bitter proof.

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LOVE UNCHANGED

SHE sang of Love and of Love's sorrows seven,
 'Sighing the while that he
In answer sang of Love the Gate of Heaven,
 The Crown of Life, the joyful mystery—
'Such love,' he sang, 'as I shall give to thee.'

But she her lute unto her sad song blending
 —Whiles he sang joyously—
Ere of Love's canticle they had made ending,
 Sang, smiling now, of Love's sad mystery—
'Such love, dear love, as thou hast given to me.'



INFLUENCES



INFLUENCES

AZURE

UPON the sheer cliff's edge, as newly lit
From tireless migrant flight, I see you stand,
Where swallows in their sharp-winged circles flit
Come back with you to wake this northern
land
From winter dreams with flash of your gold hair
Blown out upon the deep absorbing blue,
Where the eye seeks your track through parted
air
From lands for ever old, for ever new ;—

INFLUENCES

Might I but touch your vesture golden-starred,
And clasp you, fresh from other lands and skies,
Though life henceforth be blind and prison-
barred,
I shall have known the secret of your eyes !

INFLUENCES

tarred,
nd skies,
prison-
eyes !

DUSK

THE low-swathed corn is laid about your feet,
The low hot harvest-moon behind your head
Sheds a faint aureole, and about you meet
Wafts of faint sleepy airs from poppies bled
By shearing sickle in the noontide heat ;

And sleep, which can forget all weary things,
Weighs down your heavy eyelids as the dew
Weighs down the velvet of the night-moth's wings
—Sleep that will make the morning world anew
With glamour of its half-remembered things.

INFLUENCES

Oh, might you lean above me as I sink

Down at your knee, while of the sleepy breath
Of poppies all my failing senses drink,

It should be well with me, come sleep, come
death,

No more to strive, no more to hope, to think !

INFLUENCES

WHITE

YOUR veiling wimple folded maidenly

Is white as the tall lily-buds that sway
Enclosed and scentless yet about your knee,
As slow you pace your shaded garden-way.

From slender shoulders to the hidden feet

In long straight folds your shrouding mantle
falls ;

So still you pass I think I only meet

Your gliding shadow on the cloister walls,

But for a waft of other airs than these

So gross of earth ; I know them for your gift
Pure beyond joy, and exquisite to ease
The heavy burden that no hand may lift.

INFLUENCES

SCARLET

Your windows all with scarlet are alight,
From scarlet lips your immemorial song
Draws phantom faces from the waste of night
Out of the depths where they have slumbered
long.

A thousand lights awake the sleeping gleam
Of living jewel in the jewelled cup,
And in your eyes awakes a long-dreamt dream
Above the countless faces gazing up.

All covetous and pale hot-eyed they gaze—
And should you signal me from out the throng,
The cup, the kiss from lips that blind and craze,
Were guerdon for irreparable wrong !

INFLUENCES

RUSSET

RED hung the apple from the bough,
The first-fruit of the Autumn's yield,
Along the hill behind the plough
The flashing starlings turned and wheeled;
And you, where the low sunshine barred
Your cheek as with a golden stripe,
Offered a fruit unflecked, unmarred,
As Eve's own apple rosy-ripe,
—'Twas mine to leave or mine to taste,
And had I tasted, would my toil
Have garnered for the years of waste
Some fruit with you beyond despoil?

INFLUENCES

PURPLE AND GOLD

BACK roll the brazen gates, the trumpet rings
To listening heaven above the prostrate crowd;
Where the long stair leads up between the
wings
Of great man-headed bulls, you stand when all
are bowed.

Priestess and Queen from out the inmost shrine
Armed and unveiled to all who dare to gaze
Upon your face beneath the helmet's shine,
On your mailed breast where mystic jewels
blaze.

There is no blood upon your virgin spear,
Though high your chariot wheels were splashed
with red ;

INFLUENCES

From your high throne you do not bend to hear
The death-cry of the hosts which you have
led.

Ah ! choose me but to follow, though your ways
May never lead me back as when you came,
Led by the Singers of the ancient days
Unto the temple of the Flying Fame !

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